542 world's championship in Helsinki (1937) and in
[524] Lucerne (1939). Chess also is widely played.
[541] Estonian Games, like the Singing Festivals, were arranged at five-year intervals in all types of sports. Performances of folk dances were especially impressive, with hundred of pairs of dancers participating.

Estonian athletes continue to excel also under the Soviet rule, but they appear on U. S. S. R. teams and their nationality is not mentioned.

181 Basic attitudes. Estonians are not always an easy-going people. They have to a certain degree the "heavy spirit," a kind of basic suspiciousness and distrust and a tendency toward pessimism. Their hard past and the injustices suffered at the hand of their conquerors are perhaps good reasons for these attitudes.

533 Of special interest are the song-tales whose first lines are usually recited and which are then continued in the song. Due to the lack of musical instruments, especially in former times, special dance songs have been sung to accompany the dances.

538 Storytelling is the most favored pastime of the Vepsians. Some Vepsians have achieved in this art a high degree of skill. Especially common in the tale repertoire are the animal tales, but tales of priests, farm hands, the devil, the stupid but lucky youngest brother, and some anecdotes are often told. Since the Vepsians are bilingual, the stories are told either in Vepsian or in Russian. Fairy tales form the most vital genre among the Vepsians, and even the children practice telling them.

The Vepsians have so many proverbs that for almost every situation there is an appropriate saying. Part of them have been borrowed from the Russians, but a part are also clearly of local origin. The solving of riddles is practised not only among the children but also among adults. Sometimes a group of people come together to tell riddles and thus to find out who is smartest among them. Quoted here are several representative proverbs and riddles:

524 538

(a) Who grows up without discipline will die without honor.

524 (b) Who digs a grave for the other one
538 will fall in himself.

(a) The small Makarii asks everybody to lift up his feet. /Treshold./

(b) Four brothers run next to each other, but cannot reach each other. /Wagon/

(c) In the middle the fire is burning, around is the Lake Onega. /Samovar./

751 Charms and incantations are used for healing sickness, averting dangers, and if the mishaps have already occurred, for finding relief from trouble. Especially interesting are the snake charms. The Vepsian charms and incantations seem to be, for the most part, of Russian origin.

533 The spiritual songs and legends are presented mainly by people who have seen much trouble--the old people and the beggars. Blind people on their begging trips used to sing them. The spiritual songs are taken over completely from the Russian songs.

Weeping songs are sung mainly on two occasions--in connection with marriage and with death. But any adversity can be the subject of weeping songs. In recent years the Vepsians have sung of the war, which rolled over their villages and robbed them of their husbands,